

I was drinking my first cup of coffee when Robert McCartney's December 6 column jolted me awake. The column left out a lot of critical facts about the proposed FBI relocation.

Here are some facts about why Fairfax County—not Prince Georges County—makes the most sense as the new home of the FBI.

Let's start with the fact that the Feds already own a seventy-acre site adjacent to not only the Springfield-Franconia Metro but also to a wide range of transit. In addition to the VRE, transit riders can connect to Metro bus, the Fairfax Connector, DASH (Alexandria transit), the DC Circulator, MARC, OmniLink, and the Quantico Base VRE shuttle. Not only that, but the FBI training academy in Quantico, just south of Springfield on I-95 is easily accessible from the GSA site .

At a time when the Federal government is mandated to reduce spending, the GSA site would be just about free—the government already owns it. Not only that, but we know that security would not be an issue. There's already an entity on that site that employs mega security. And a major Metro police station is being built on the adjacent Metro property.

We should be leveraging the major infrastructure improvements around the Franconia-Springfield site. The Mixing Bowl reconstruction between 1999 and 2007 was largely federally financed. The Beltway Express Lanes that opened last month were funded through a public/private partnership. The first phase of the Silver Line (Rail to Dulles) will open in 2013 and the biggest private revitalization project in the area—Springfield Mall—is just steps away from the Metro and GSA site.

Back to that spending reduction mandate—at a time when the Feds and the state are cutting costs while pushing them down to the localities, why would we think it's a good idea to take commercial properties off the tax rolls? The GSA site is already off those rolls. Before the GSA looks at redeveloping private sites, it ought to heed its own mandate to maximize its existing assets and create transit-oriented workplaces. Its current warehouse in Springfield runs counter to both these goals.

So to recap the strengths of the Springfield GSA site:

- It's steps away from the Franconia-Springfield Metro station and every major road but Route 66.

- It takes advantage of the public and private sector investments already made in the area
- It lends itself to the necessary security configuration
- It's cost effective—the Feds already own the site
- And lastly—this can be fast tracked on the County side. Our Fairfax County Board of Supervisors is already on record with a unanimous endorsement of this site for the FBI.

It's in everyone's best interest to ensure a fair process moving forward. When fairly weighed against other sites in the region the Springfield, the Virginia site wins hands down.